

SUMMARY OF THE OFFICE ACTION

1. Claim 8 is objected to as having a preamble that is inconsistent with the claim from which it is asserted to depend.
2. Claims 1-3, 6-8 and 11 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,805,907 (Hagiwara).
3. Claims 4, 5, 9 and 10 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,805,907 (Hagiwara) in view of Published US Patent Application No. 10/381,682 (which claims PCT priority from an application filed on September 25, 2001).

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RESPONSE TO THE OFFICE ACTION

1. Claim 8 is objected to as having a preamble that is inconsistent with the claim from which it is asserted to depend.

Claim 8 has been amended to remove the informality.

2. Claims 1-3, 6-8 and 11 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,805,907 (Hagiwara).

Claim 1 as now pending reads:

A gaming machine system, including: a processor ~~[[processing means for]]~~ determining a result of a slot machine game at processor controlled times or time intervals; and a plurality of terminals linked via communication means to said processor ~~[[processing means]]~~, the outcome at each said terminal being solely dependent on the single, communal result determined by said processor ~~[[processing means]]~~.

CLAIM 1	Hagiwara	COMMENTS
A gaming machine system, including:	The slot machine according to the embodiment shown in FIG. 1 comprises one main machine 1	
a processor determining a result of a slot machine game <u>at processor controlled times or time intervals</u> ; and	The main machine 1 includes a central processing unit (CPU) 11. The CPU is connected to a symbol generator 12, for showing the pictures and patterns in the symbol rows, and a program memory 13 for storing a program for letting the game proceed.	Hagiwara has games initiated only by coin insertion and play at a main machine.
a plurality of terminals <u>communicatively</u> linked to said processor,	three subordinate machines 2a-2c. The main machine 1 is connected to the subordinate machines 2a-2c by cables 3, 4a-4c made of optical fibers, wires or the like through a distributor 5.	
the outcome at each said terminal being solely dependent on the single,	the CPU 11 starts the game according to the program stored in the program	Hagiwara has the CPU in a terminal determine the outcome, making other

communal result	memory 13, selects a pay line for each subordinate machine in accordance with the number of coins betted and lets the game proceed. Meanwhile, CRT display device 6 and the CRT monitors 7a-7c display the proceeding of the game. ... A "win" is found while the game is going on. That is, it is judged whether a combination of symbols lined along the pay line when the symbols are stopped on the CRT screen agrees with a preset combination of symbols. When the former combination agrees with the latter, the CPU 11 computes a payment rate for each won combination of each subordinate machine. Then, the CPU 11 outputs a payment command to a corresponding subordinate machine.	terminals appear to be dependent upon a terminal controlled by another player.
determined by said processor.	The coin paying-out mechanism of the subordinate machine which has received the payment command pays out a number of coins in accordance with the payment command. The judgement of "win" is made by the CPU 11 based on a preset table of win combinations, a random number table or others.	

The underlying technology of Hagiwara requires a main machine, that is, an actual player-accessible slot machine. The main machine performs the games on demand by a player seated at that main machine, upon entry of a wager and mechanical/electronic.

input into the slot main machine. After a player is operating the main machine, other players may engage other machines on which the play activity of the main machine that is transmitted to the satellite machines. Thus, the system of Hagiwara requires a player at a specific machine (the main machine) before the other machines may be engaged. The play on the other machines is controlled (by way of timing) by physical entry of input by the player at the main machine. This is substantively different from the system described in the present claims.

In the present technology, a processor that is not actually driven by a terminal, but rather which operates independently of a specific terminal, generates game events. These game events may even be provided without any player at any terminal, and the results are displayed on a communal display and/or on each of the terminals, whether or not wagering has occurred. Players may sit any one of or all of the terminals and wager money on a game that is performed by the common processor, rather than a processor at a specific terminal (main machine) that must be specifically engaged before any other terminal can be operated. These differences are significant. Hagiwara does not anticipate the practices of:

- a) a processor determining a result of a slot machine game at processor controlled times or time intervals; (Claim 1)
- b) at least one player making a wager on a slot machine game at any respective terminal; determining the result of the slot machine game with said processor (Claim 7)
- c) whether or not said wagers have been made, rotating a plurality of moving reels included in said gaming machine system a predetermined or random number of times, (Claim 11)

These limitations in the independent claims are not shown by Hagiwara and the claims cannot be anticipated.

3. Claims 4, 5, 9 and 10 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,805,907 (Hagiwara) in view of Burill, Published US Patent Application No. 10/381,682 (which claims PCT priority from an application filed on September 25, 2001).

This reference has not been cited to overcome the deficiencies of the failure of Hagiwara to teach the distinct nature of the processor from the engagement of a specific slot machine (the main machine) taught by Hagiwara. As that teaching is not available from the combination of references, the rejection under 35 USC 103(a) must also fail.

Patentability of NEW Claim 17 - This new claim is also patentable. The claim recites, with **emphasis** added on terms to emphasize their importance, although not to the exclusion of other terms providing descriptions of novelty and unobviousness:

A gaming machine system, including: **a processor determining a result of a slot machine game having actual or simulated symbols displayed in reel format at processor controlled times or time intervals**; and a plurality of terminals communicatively linked to said processor, the **outcome at each said terminal being solely dependent on the single, communal result determined by said processor.**

No reference is believed to shown a communal processor determining a specific reel format event result, and using that single reel format event result to determine wagering outcomes at a multiplicity of wagering terminals that have made a general wager on a reel event outcome.

CONCLUSION

All objections and rejections have been corrected or traversed. All rejections and objections should be removed and all claims allowed.

If the Examiner believes that an interview might expedite prosecution of the application or reduce issues, the Examiner is respectfully invited to call the attorney of record at 952.832.9090 during business hours, central Time Zone.

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Respectfully submitted,

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